

**Human Rights Council  
Friday, February 8, 2008  
9<sup>th</sup> Street Office Building, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Conference Room  
11:00 a.m.**

**DRAFT**

**Council Members Present:** Jon D. Strother, Chairman; David Drachsler, Vice Chairman; Dyana Mason, Parliamentarian; Members Charles Baugham and Donald O. Campen, Jr.

**Staff Present:** Sandra D. Norman, Director; Cora M. Billings, Deputy Director; and Timothy Wilson, Administration/Operations Manager.

**Council's Attorneys Present:** Guy Horsley, Senior Assistant Attorney General and Teri Miles, Senior Assistant Attorney General.

**Call to Order and Adoption of Agenda and Minutes:**

The Chairman called the meeting to order. On the motion by Member Campen and seconded by Member Mason, the motion carried to adopt the draft agenda. On motion by Member Campen and seconded by Member Baugham, the motion carried to adopt the minutes as presented from the December 7, 2007 meeting.

**Director's Report**

**Budget Crisis**

- Ms. Norman reported that at the moment there is a proposed 5% reduction for state agencies. More cuts are anticipated. Instructions from the Governor's Chief of Staff have been received for spending restrictions and special requests must be made through the appropriate cabinet secretary for approval.
- In accordance to initial budgetary restraints, Ms. Ashley Marriott has been laid off and Mr. Geraldo Williams' hours have been reduced.

**Co-Location**

- Ms. Norman has met with her cabinet secretary and the agency head of the Department of Employment Dispute Resolution in regards to both agencies sharing space. Another meeting is scheduled for today. Even though the Human Rights Council (Council) will share some office equipment and some other office resources, the Council will remain an independent agency. Other agencies have also started working on this initiative.

#### Gerald Snead

- Ms. Norman acknowledged the return of Mr. Gerald Snead, Chief Investigator, from his medical leave.

#### Legislation

- Ms. Norman reported that House Bill 198 died in committee.
- House Bill 675 did not report out prior to cross-over.
- House Bill 1472 regarding speaking English passed the House, but is not expected to pass the Senate.

#### Brown Bag Series

- Guy Horsley, Senior Assistant Attorney General and agency counsel, will provide legal updates and training for Council staff once a month. Topics will concentrate on the bases that the Council investigates such as race, religion, etc. This training is free to staff members.

#### Public Forum

- The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Charlotte District office in partnership with the Council will conduct a public forum in Staunton, Virginia at its city council chamber on Friday, March 28, 2008, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

#### Intake Status

- Intake statistical reports for December 2007 were distributed.

#### Mediations

- Mediations are being scheduled again with the return of Mr. Gerald Snead.

#### Annual Report

- Ms. Norman presented a draft copy to the Chairman. At this time, as a result of the budget shortfall, the printing of the annual report may be delayed.

#### Commonwealth Dinner

- The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Commonwealth Dinner, sponsored by Equality Virginia, will be held on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. The speaker is Mr. Daniel O'Donnell, State Representative of the 69<sup>th</sup> district of the New York State Assembly and is celebrity Rosie O'Donnell's brother.

## **Chairman's Report**

### Appeal Process

- The Chairman presented the appeal process flow chart and wishes to discuss it further at the next meeting. A discussion was centered on various sections regarding the process of the panel's review and decision process for appeal dispositions.

### Virginia Association for Human Rights

- The Chairman gave an update on the planning meeting held in January for the annual conference to be held June 13-14, 2008 in Virginia Beach.
- In addition to the association's officers, the Council was represented at the planning meeting by Chairman Jon Strother, Council members Dyana Mason and Mary Studevart and staff members Sandra Norman, Cora Billings and Timothy Wilson.

## **New Business**

### Public Forum

- The Vice Chairman presented a concept to hold a public forum on the local impact of immigration on civil and human rights. The forum would be held in northern Virginia, preferably after the U.S. presidential elections in November. It was moved by the Vice Chairman to adopt the concept and was seconded by Member Mason and carried.
- The forum should be held preferably the first or second week of December 2008.

### Appeal Assignment

- The Chairman appointed an appeal for Case #1732 and appointed Member Campen its chairman.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Submitted by,

Jon Strother  
Chairman

Timothy Wilson  
Recorder